

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

## FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

May 2003



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

### Job gains concentrated in few sectors

In April, the unemployment rate for **South Central Wisconsin** fell six tenths of a percent, as it normally would in April, but remained well above typical rates. (See table below and chart at middle.) As the first signs of spring emerged, the construction sector added jobs, but not enough to match last April's levels. Leisure & hospitality was the only industry to post strong job growth numerically and proportionally from March to April and from April 2002 to April 2003.

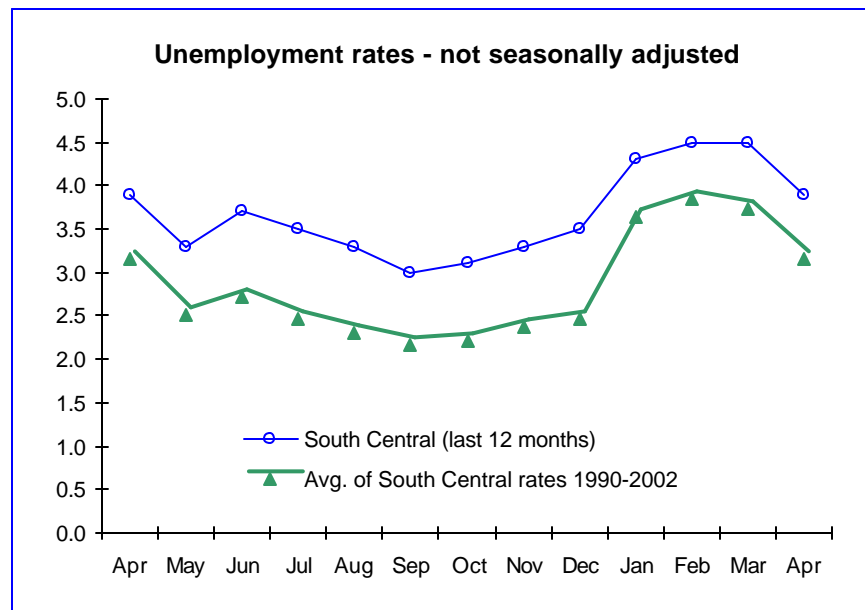
The gap between **Columbia County's** current unemployment rate and its typical rate remained small and almost unchanged in April. The trade sector saw its third consecutive month of accelerating job gains, but has not yet overcome job losses from September through January. Comparing last April to this April, leisure & hospitality was the only sector to add a substantial number of jobs. Roughly 400 manufacturing jobs were lost between August and February. The summer peaks will show how many return.

Unemployment rates in **Dane County** remain slightly above typical levels. Appearing to mitigate anecdotal evidence of white collar unemployment, professional & business services added 1,700 jobs in April, showing the strongest growth over the month and over the year. This one-month change is well outside recent trends and may be moderated by

future months' estimates or revisions. The loss of manufacturing jobs was moderate in relation to recent gains. Dane was the only South Central county where leisure & hospitality was not among leading job growth sectors

The gap between current unemployment rates and typical remains larger in **Dodge County** than in any other South Central county.

This has been the case for nine of the last twelve months. Two of the other three months, Dodge County was within a tenth of a percent of tying for highest. This month's manufacturing job losses were modest, but the sector is still wait-



### Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	3,074,500	-7,780	62,700	450,100	640	11,600	29,000	160	850	288,200	660	8,500
Employed	2,896,600	14,400	63,400	432,700	3,400	11,100	27,100	520	710	280,300	1,800	8,300
Unemployed	177,800	-22,170	-710	17,400	-2,790	480	1,900	-370	140	7,900	-1,140	220
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	-0.7	-0.1	3.9	-0.6	0.0	6.6	-1.3	0.3	2.7	-0.4	0.0

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	46,100	-140	390	42,600	-50	260	7,700	-60	210	36,500	90	1,410
Employed	43,300	320	430	40,400	290	300	7,000	140	180	34,600	370	1,230
Unemployed	2,900	-460	-40	2,200	-340	-40	690	-200	20	1,890	-280	180
Unemployment rate (%)	6.2	-1.0	-0.2	5.1	-0.8	-0.1	8.9	-2.5	0.1	5.2	-0.8	0.3

\*\* Includes labor force participants residing in area. Estimates are **NOT** seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us.

ing to recover from substantial losses in October, November and January. In this light, it might seem rather impressive that leisure & hospitality has managed to add so many jobs over the last month and over the last year. Education & health services was the only other sector to show numerically and proportionally significant growth over the last year. (Construction added several jobs in April, but modest one-year growth figures suggest that this change was mostly seasonal.)

**Jefferson County's** unemployment rate fell in April and was slightly closer to its typical level than it has been since October. (The labor force estimates on page one do not consider striking workers unemployed until they start looking for new jobs, but the employment-by-industry estimates below do reflect roughly 470 fewer manufacturing jobs due to a strike.) The decline in manufacturing jobs seen in March has not yet begun to reverse itself. Leisure & hospitality appear to be recovering nicely from some softness (probably seasonal) in January and February. This was the only sector to post substantial job growth from last April to this April. Even if there were no strike, other manufacturing job losses (from last April to this April) would still be nearly double the job gains in leisure & hospitality over the same time period.

Over the last year, the gap between typical unemployment rates and current unemployment rates has fluctuated widely in **Marquette County**. In April, that gap was as small as it has been at any time since last April. Dropping from 11.4 percent unemployment to 8.9 percent is certainly a welcome change, but not quite as extraordinary as it might seem, considering

that five of the last twelve years have seen March-to-April drops just as great or greater. Construction added more jobs in April than any other sector, but would have had to add nearly twice as many just to reach last April's construction employment level. Leisure & hospitality and trade were the only sectors to show significant growth over the month (March to April) and over the year (last April to this April). Though manufacturing has not picked up the spring momentum that one might expect, stagnancy looks better than declines faced elsewhere, especially when this April's manufacturing employment remains greater than last April's.

For the first time since January, **Sauk County's** unemployment rate poked slightly above typical rates. Nonetheless, Sauk County remained closer to typical April rates than any other South Central county and its rate did fall by 0.8 percent. Construction, trade, and transportation, warehousing & utilities added jobs between March and April, but none added many jobs between last April and this April. The trade sector reports nearly 600 fewer jobs this April than last. It will take a few months of peak retail season to know how much of this is seasonal. The other industry suffering major losses over the last year is information, professional, business & other services, where September, October and November dealt large job losses that do not appear to fit obvious seasonal patterns. Comparing last April to this April, the leisure & hospitality sector is the only private sector to add a significant number of jobs. Indeed, without those job gains, total (all-industries) employment would be lower this April than last.

### Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	2,765,100	25,500	-500	428,600	5,600	3,800	21,300	460	130	300,000	3,600	4,100
Const., min'g & nat. resources	112,600	10,000	-8,900	19,800	1,600	-430	1,100	80	40	13,500	1,000	-400
Manufacturing	514,600	-1,100	-10,500	60,500	-320	140	4,800	30	-110	28,800	-200	1,900
Trade (wholesale & retail)	425,000	2,600	500	60,300	290	-960	3,200	130	-80	40,600	-100	-300
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	104,600	400	200	11,200	450	120	690	40	-20	7,400	300	900
Financial activities	155,700	2,300	3,400	28,600	180	630	580	0	30	25,000	200	700
Education & health services	362,500	-600	6,900	43,500	-60	1,130	2,600	0	30	28,700	0	900
Leisure & hospitality	232,700	6,100	1,300	39,900	810	2,600	2,300	70	270	23,400	0	-100
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	430,000	4,300	7,400	68,700	1,980	2,500	2,000	70	-10	56,400	1,800	3,500
Government	427,400	1,500	-800	96,300	710	-1,900	4,000	60	-10	76,200	600	-2,200

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Apr 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	32,700	420	-240	35,200	460	-820	4,000	160	70	35,400	540	610
Const., min'g & nat. resources	2,100	220	30	1,190	100	40	170	60	-50	1,730	150	-90
Manufacturing	10,100	-70	-640	9,200	-20	-970	1,300	0	90	6,200	-50	-120
Trade (wholesale & retail)	3,800	30	-80	6,100	150	70	470	20	30	6,000	60	-590
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	1,010	30	30	1,220	30	-40	60	0	0	820	50	50
Financial activities	710	10	-30	950	10	20	110	-10	0	1,210	-30	-80
Education & health services	4,200	-50	260	4,500	-10	-110	290	0	-10	3,300	0	70
Leisure & hospitality	2,600	140	250	3,300	170	240	460	50	30	7,800	390	1,880
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	2,800	70	-160	4,400	50	-70	230	0	-20	2,800	-10	-700
Government	5,400	40	90	4,200	-20	0	880	30	0	5,600	-10	210

\*Includes jobs with employers in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary.

Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us.